

Message on the Observance of Armenian Remembrance Day *April 24, 2002*

Today, we commemorate an appalling tragedy of the 20th century, the massacre of as many as 1.5 million Armenians through forced exile and murder at the end of the Ottoman Empire. These horrific killings left wounds that remain painful for people in Armenia, in Turkey, and around the world. I join the Armenian community in America and across the globe in mourning this horrendous loss of life.

Today is an occasion for the world to reflect upon and draw lessons from these terrible events. It is a day for recognizing that demonizing others lays the foundation for a dark cycle of hatred. Transcending this venomous pattern requires painful introspection about the past and wise determination to forge a new future based on truth and reconciliation. In this spirit, I look forward to Turkey restoring economic, political, and cultural links with Armenia.

The United States greatly values the contributions that Armenians make to our national life. With faith and courage, generations of Armenians have overcome great suffering and proudly preserved their centuries-old culture, traditions, and religion. The United States is also deeply grateful for Armenia's swift and decisive cooperation in the war against terrorism. Just as the United States reached out to the Armenian people to provide shelter and freedom

early in the last century, so did Armenia extend a supportive hand to the American people in the immediate aftermath of September 11. Our two peoples stand together in this fight in support of values that define civilization itself.

I am also very proud of America's strong support for a free Armenian state, whose citizens enjoy the fruits of peace and increasing prosperity. In the months to come, America will continue to increase its security cooperation with Armenia and with Armenia's neighbors to combat terrorism and pursue a lasting and just settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which will strengthen peace and stability in the Caucasus. The United States will also continue its strong support for Armenia's efforts to develop democratic and free market institutions, and to deepen its integration into the Euro-Atlantic community.

On behalf of the American people, I send warm wishes and expressions of solidarity to the Armenian people on this solemn day of remembrance. Together, our nations look with hope and determination toward a future of peace, prosperity, and freedom.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks at a Reception for Senatorial Candidate John Thune in Sioux Falls, South Dakota *April 24, 2002*

Thank you all very much. Thank you. It is great to be back in South Dakota. I want to thank you all for such a warm and gracious welcome. I am here because I want John Thune to become the next

United States Senator. I want to thank you for helping him. He is—my attitude is, anytime you find a person of high character and strong values, you've got to help him, and I want to thank you for doing that.